JANUARY, 1954
Vol. 9 No. 1

New South

All material presented in NEW SOUTH *may be used freely by other publications. A credit line will be appreciated.*

A Progress Report

The Color Line in Southern Libraries

By ANNA HOLDEN

IN 1941 Dr. Eliza Atkins Gleason's careful survey of the *Southern Negro and the Public Library* revealed that only sixteen communities in the South gave any type of service to Negroes through their main public libraries. Four of those — Covington, Ky., Brady, Pecos and El Paso, Texas —offered full service; the other twelve limited Negro patrons to separate reading rooms, partial privileges, or service in the summer months. Mrs. Gleason's comment on the situation in the early 1940's suggests the state of public thinking on Negro use of regular public library channels at that time. "That full privileges are extended to Negroes anywhere in the Southern region," Mrs. Gleason stated, "is a most interesting development."

In the twelve years since 1941, Negro use of the main library has grown from an isolated phenomenon to an increasingly acceptable practice in certain areas of the South.

A Southern Regional Council mail survey of librarians, state library commissions and associations indicates that by January, 1953, public library "integration" in the South had gone this far:

1) In fifty-nine cities and towns Negroes have free use of the main public library.
2) Twenty-four communities give limited service to Negroes at the main library.
3) In eleven localities in the South one or more branches give service to patrons regardless of race.
4) Three library systems have Negro representation on their boards.

In January, 1953, the Southern Regional Council wrote the chief librarians in 172 cities and towns in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. Librarians were asked whether Negroes in their community had access to the main library and to the branches in the library system and whether there was Negro representation on the library board. State library commissions and associations in these states were also queried. The above report is based on returns from this survey.

State	Localities where full service to Negroes is given at main library	Localities where limited service to Negroes is given at main library	Localities where one or more branches give service regardless of race
Kentucky	21	1	1
Texas	18	3	2
Virginia	6	1	3
North Carolina	4	4	1
Tennessee	4	0	0
Oklahoma	3	0	2
Florida	2	6	2
Arkansas	1	1	0
Louisiana	0	6	0
Alabama	0	1	0
Georgia	0	1	0
Mississippi	0	0	0
South Carolina	0	0	0

Comments from the librarians testify that main libraries which claim to serve Negroes freely actually do. The librarian at the downtown public library in Burlington, N. C., for example, states: "Since the middle forties this library has been open to Negroes on the same basis as the whites. A resolution of the Board of Trustees set this as a policy. I can truthfully say that they have had this service in actuality as well as in the letter of the law during the past four years." Similarly, the librarian in Miami's new million-dollar central library writes: "Negroes use the library freely, children's room, as well as the adult department. Negroes also attend programs."

Four of the fifty-nine libraries on the "full service" list — Little Rock, Ark., Knoxville and Nashville, Tenn., and Bryan, Texas — do not serve Negro children. The Little Rock librarian declares: "The Children's Department is not open because it is already over-crowded and the branch library has a very good collection of children's books."

"Limited service" to Negroes in main libraries may mean anything from regular use of all facilities but the reading room to special service on "rare occasions." The librarian at Gastonia, N. C., reports that "all resources of books, periodicals, audio-visual materials, reference facilities are open to Negro use, but the main reading room is not open." A conference room is made available for Negroes who wish to use these materials in the Gastonia Library. The New Orleans central public library admits and serves Negroes in the main library building, but sets separate reading tables aside for Negro use. Lake Charles, La., follows the same practice.

Where "limited service" is more restrictive, Negroes may borrow directly those materials which do not circulate through inter-library loan, or apply for reference service not available at the branch. A few librarians stipulate giving main library service to professional Negroes or college students. Still others serve Negroes who seek service in the main library, but do not "encourage" Negro patronage.

Successful experience in opening the downtown library to all citizens has paved the way for a small number of formerly "white" and "Negro"

branches to begin serving patrons regardless of race. Six or eight years after the main library in Burlington, N. C., dropped racial barriers, one of the "white" branches voted to serve Negroes. According to the chief librarian of Miami's central library, which opened on a non-segregated basis, there is a "Negro" branch on the border of a white residential district which both whites and Negroes use. Chattanooga, Tenn., opened its main library to Negroes in 1949 and now plans a new branch in a predominately Negro neighborhood which will be open to any resident of the area. It will not be called a "Negro" branch.

Integration of the white and Negro divisions of the University of Louisville was influential in the Louisville library board's decision to open all the city libraries to patrons regardless of race. The resolution adopted by the board in 1952 noted the necessity for "complete freedom of interchange between the students of the University of Louisville and the patrons of the Public Library" and demanded "that the agencies of the Louisville Free Public Library be opened to all citizens." Negroes were admitted to the main library in 1948.

A new policy regarding Negro patrons in the main library does not always precede or accompany integration of the branch libraries. The Secretary of the Florida State Library Association reports that certain "white" branches in one of Florida's leading cities are used by Negroes through special arrangement between the branch libraries. The downtown library is still limited to white use.

Though Southern libraries are opening doors while many other public agencies are duplicating separate services, libraries in the South have lagged behind the public schools, city government bodies and social service agencies in Negro board representation. Just three Southern cities have Negroes on their library boards—Louisville, Ky., Roanoke, Va., and Winston-Salem, N. C. Yet Negroes

LOCALITIES IN THE SOUTH GIVING FULL SERVICE TO NEGROES AT MAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Little Rock, Ark.*
Miami, Fla.
Miami Beach, Fla.
Ashland, Ky.
Carlisle, Ky.
Carrollton, Ky.
Corbin, Ky.
Covington, Ky.
Erlanger, Ky.
Greensburg, Ky.
Greenville, Ky.
Glasgow, Ky.
Hazard, Ky.
Horse Cave, Ky.
Jenkins, Ky.
Lexington, Ky.
Louisville, Ky.
Maysville, Ky.
Newport, Ky.
Owenton, Ky.
Paducah, Ky.
Paris, Ky.
Pikesville, Ky.
Wheelwright, Ky.
Avery County, N. C.
Burlington, N. C.
Watauga County, N. C.
Yancey County, N. C.
Norman, Okla.
Oklahoma City, Okla.
Tulsa, Okla.
Chattanooga, Tenn.
Hardin County, Tenn.
Knoxville, Tenn.*
Nashville, Tenn.*
Amarillo, Tex.
Austin, Tex.
Borger, Tex.
Bryan, Tex.*
Corpus Christi, Tex.
El Paso, Tex.
Ector County, Tex.
Fort Worth, Tex.
Harlingen, Tex.
Houston, Tex.
Houtchinson County, Tex.
McAllen, Tex.
Mission, Tex.
San Antonio, Tex.
Seymour, Tex.
Sweetwater, Tex.
Texarkana, Tex.
Waxahachie, Tex.
Fredericksburg, Va.
Halifax County, Va.
Harrisonburg, Va.
Newport News, Va.
Norfolk, Va.
Roanoke, Va.

* Negro adults only.

sit on public school boards in at least nine communities and on city councils in at least ten towns in the South.

For some time Negroes have had unofficial representation on advisory committees of the public libraries. Special committees of Negroes and whites often play an important part in expanding Negro branches and in opening up the main library to Negro use. Many Negro branches and independent libraries have their own Negro boards. This, however, is not the same as full voice and vote on the city library board. As the Birmingham branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People recently stated in a letter to the Mayor concerning the appointment of a Negro advisory committee to the library board:

> We acknowledge this to be a step forward and for that we commend your board for recognizing and beginning to meet a need. We take the liberty of suggesting, however, that the problems in this, as in all other areas of common interest, are so many and so complex . . . that solutions will be unattainable unless and until representatives from the various segments of the population in the community can sit down together as human beings with a common interest and the opportunity for full discussion and consideration . . . We trust that in the not too distant future, action will be taken to have Negro representatives as an integral part of the Library Board. Through such positive participation, we are certain that there will be greater mutual understanding and both human relations and library science will be improved.

Population figures show that public library integration is taking place chiefly in areas where few Negroes live. Nearly four-fifths of the fifty-nine localities extending full library privileges to all their citizens have Negro populations making up less than 20% of the total. Many are located in the hills of Kentucky and the flatlands of western Texas, where Negroes compose 3%, 10%, perhaps 12% of all residents. Towns such as Harrisonburg, in the mountains of Virginia, feel they can no longer justify operating a branch for the six to seven hundred Negroes in the population.

Not all the localities giving Negroes full service in their main libraries have small Negro populations or are found in "border" states. Eleven have Negro populations ranging upwards from 21% to 44%. "Southern" cities like Chattanooga, Tenn., with a 30% Negro population; Newport News, Va., 43% Negro; and Little Rock, Ark., 24% Negro, have come to realize that a separate library system is prohibitive if any attempt is made to accompany the separateness with equal facilities.

While cities the size of Chattanooga, Nashville, and Norfolk often have branches set up in both white and Negro neighborhoods, the task of pro-

(*Continued on page* 11)

LOCALITIES IN THE SOUTH GIVING LIMITED SERVICE TO NEGROES AT MAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Birmingham, Ala.	Augusta, Ga.	Charlotte, N. C.
Fort Smith, Ark.	Lebanon, Ky.	Fayetteville, N. C.
Daytona Beach, Fla.	E. Baton Rouge Parish, La.	Gastonia, N. C.
Orlando, Fla.	Jefferson Parish, La.	Greensboro, N. C.
Lakeland, Fla.	Lafayette Parish, La.	Lufkin, Tex.
Pensacola, Fla.	Lake Charles, La.	Midland County, Tex.
St. Petersburg, Fla.	New Orleans, La.	Port Arthur, Tex.
Key West, Fla.	Tangipahoa Parish, La.	Suffolk, Va.

Where Can a Southern Negro Read a Book?

By L. D. Reddick

THE American Library Association tells us that 24,000,000 Americans are completely without library service. Some 19,000,000 more have service that is so inadequate as to be termed "next to nothing."

Most of these unfortunates live in mountain areas, forgotten bayous and far away backwoods where our cultural institutions have scarcely penetrated. But not all of these library-less fellow citizens are thus isolated. Some do live in towns and cities where the streets are paved, where electric lights brighten the evenings and schools and churches dot the hillsides. These places do have tax-supported public libraries; however, they are "for white only."

From time to time in the Southwest and West one encounters libraries that are not open to "Mexicans" and "Indians." But it is in the South that we find the largest group of Americans who are denied access to our public institutions for the reading of books. Thus, the Southern Negro is perhaps the most forlorn of all those 43,000,000 sons and daughters of our country who have extremely "poor" library service — or none at all.

From Washington, D. C., to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Atlantic Ocean to the westernmost fringes of Texas and Oklahoma the public places are few and far between where a Negro may sit down and read a book — even though his tax dollar has helped buy that book, erect the building which houses it and pay the salary of the librarian who may tell him curtly or apologetically: "We do not serve Negroes."

OLD, OLD STORY

In part this is the old, old story of jimcrow that has left its deep festering sores on the American character and social order. In the thirteen states of our nation that prescribe racial segregation in most phases of public life — Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas — approximately 10,000,000 Negroes live. Two-thirds of them have no library service whatsoever, even though over a million of these Southerners live in communities where library service is provided for white readers.

Most of the 3,000,000-odd Negroes who do have access to some sort of a library, live in a community that has a "Negro branch" in it somewhere. While it may be ridiculous to think of a single branch library serving the entire Negro population of such big

Dr. L. D. Reddick, who here views current racial practices in public libraries, is chief librarian of Atlanta University. He was previously Curator of the famed Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature at the New York Public Library.

cities as Jacksonville, Florida, Montgomery, Alabama, or Savannah, Georgia, this is the way things are at the present time. The Negro population in such places may be well over the 50,000 mark and the Negro neighborhoods may have grown up in widely different parts of the metropolitan area. A Negro reader having to travel some five or ten miles to read a book might lose some of his enthusiasm for doing so en route.

BRANCH LIBRARIES

Some old and well established cities like Macon, Georgia, are just now getting a Negro branch library — and after considerable turmoil. On the other hand, some of the bigger towns and cities have more than one Negro branch and several stations where, from time to time, books may be deposited for Negro readers. The Director of the Atlanta Public Library writes that this city operates three branches "exclusively" for Negroes. Atlanta Negro citizens answer by saying that they do not need the kind of exclusiveness that excludes them from the main library.

These Negro branches vary from modern up-to-date buildings of the type to be found in Columbus, Georgia, and Ponca City, Oklahoma, to structures that are as old, badly located, as uncomfortable, ill-lighted, and ugly as buildings can get. In the more recent set-ups, the books are usually new and worthwhile whereas in some of the older branches there should be no wonder that nobody reads what's there: the material is not worth reading! At times the "discards" from a "white" branch or the main library may be donated to the Negro branch. At other times, all branches are treated alike and an inter-library loan system makes the city's entire circulation bookstock available to all sub-units. Reference works that the more mature reader might wish to consult, of course, are seldom available by way of inter-library loans.

Some of the out-of-the-way places are visited by a bookmobile. Here, again, the pattern varies widely. Often there are "white" bookmobiles and "Negro" bookmobiles; "white" book stations and "Negro" book stations. A white book wagon may or may not stop at a Negro book station or it may not stop there on the same trips or days that it stops at the white station — and other such nonsense. Fortunately, this is not always the arrangement.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Negro school and college libraries, though designed to meet the needs of their students and faculties, are often helpful to non-school readers of the neighborhoods surrounding these institutions. Understandably, the adult Negro working man is reluctant to visit a campus when he is not "dressed up" or a school "that's for kids."

This, then, is about the picture. Most Southern Negroes have no library service. Only about a sixth of them have first-rate service: that is to say, the library is conveniently located in a building that is clean, comfortable, well lighted and heated, with an "adequate" stock of the latest and best books and presided over by a librarian who is competent and sympathetic. Few homes of Negroes possess more than a set of some popular reference work, commercially distributed, or a couple of self-educating encyclopedias and the Holy Bible. Accordingly, is there any wonder that by and large

the Southern Negro is not much of a reader? He is a radio and TV fan, a patron of the juke box and the movie. His "recreation" is derived largely from "activity" and "conversation" rather than from books and magazines. Moreover, seldom does he consider "study" as a lever of advancement on his job or in his business or profession. Of course, we know that there are other Southerners (and no doubt Northerners and Westerners, too) who do not generally read books.

Great as is the economic poverty of the slums and "Tobacco Roads" of our country, the cultural poverty is greater — and unnecessarily so. Millions of barren lives are completely untouched by the world of books.

In an appraisal of this sort, it is always encouraging to note that some improvement has been made. The accompanying survey indicates this by chapter and verse.

WHAT PRICE EQUALITY?

In 1941, Dr. Eliza Atkins Gleason published the first and only comprehensive survey that has been made of the public library situation of the Southern Negro. At that time she found that there were 106 Negro branch libraries; today there are about twice this number. At this rate it would take three or four decades before there would be enough Negro branches in the South to serve the potential Negro reading public. If this need is to be met immediately, it would take approximately $20,000,000. No such fabulous library money is in sight. (And what demands would white readers be making while these millions were being spent for Negroes?)

Surely every additional neighborhood library that is opened is that much to the good, *if it is established on the basis of need and ordinary common sense.* Unfortunately, ever so many Negro branches have been set up mainly to keep Negroes out of "white" libraries. Often a half-used Negro branch is just a few blocks down the street from a half-used white branch. This is sheer waste. It is clear that more neighborhood libraries will have to be built in most of our states, but it is economically indefensible to build two branches where one would do or to build a new branch where the readers may be adequately served by a library already operating.

Accordingly, any real solution must come by way of a different direction, by way of expanding library service on the most economically sound and socially intelligent basis possible. That is to say, forget the color line, consider a reader a reader, open all public libraries to the whole public; and establish branches, stations, mobile routes and units *with* regard to the principles of library organization and *without* regard to the skin color of the actual and potential readers. Lest we forget, a million Negroes who do not have library service today could receive it tomorrow without the outlay of a single dime, in most instances.

STATE LIBRARY LAWS

One good thing about all of this is that there are not many legal barriers to non-discriminatory, unsegregated library service. Most of the state laws about libraries are rather general and loosely drawn. They are usually of three types: (1) those that permit cities, towns and counties to establish and maintain libraries of their own; (2) those that provide for a state library, usually in the capital; and (3) those that set up a library commission

to develop a library program for the state — especially for the smaller towns and hamlets that are scarcely able to do much for themselves unassisted.

In all three types of law, "race" and color are seldom mentioned. Frequently, the body that is authorized to administer the library program is directed to make library service available to "all of the people" of the city, county, or state, as the case may be. In Louisiana the authority of the administrators is limited to such rules as are not inconsistent with the laws of the State. In Florida any person who violates the rules of the board of control may be excluded from the library. This definiteness is unusual.

BROAD LOCAL AUTHORITY

State laws authorizing municipalities to set up libraries give wide latitude to the local authority. In five of the thirteen states the local board is specifically authorized to make such rules and regulations as it may determine to be necessary. In the other eight states this power is, of course, assumed. In but one state — Mississippi — is the library by the law of this category definitely tied in with the system of public education. Alabama law provides that county and municipal libraries may be established "either separately or in connection with the public schools." Since public education is racially separate, a tie-up of the libraries with the schools may be presumed to mean a tie-up with school jimcrow also.

Laws relating to county public libraries are similar to those for the cities. The Texas law, however, is an exception in that it specifically provides that "any white person may use the county free library" and that service to Negroes should come "through a separate branch or branches of the county free library, which shall be administered by a custodian of the Negro race under the supervision of the county librarian." Though its general law follows the pattern of not mentioning "race" or color, South Carolina's special legislation permitting Sumter County to operate a library makes it clear that it is for "all white citizens" of said county.

All of the states have a state library that is usually located in the capital city. The laws creating these institutions almost never mention "race," though some are restricted to legislators, judicial personnel, et cetera. Only North Carolina directs its state librarian "to fit up and maintain a separate place for colored people who may come to the (state) library. . . ."

LIBRARY COMMISSIONS

State laws relating to commissions for the promotion of a state library program (including the distribution of advice and financial aid) are usually more specific than the other library laws. In Georgia and Virginia, the library commission is by statutory description tied in with the state system of public education. North Carolina's State Board of Education has certain delegated authority concerning development of rural libraries and circulation libraries set up in connection with schools. The state superintendent of public instruction or his equivalent is often an ex-officio member of the library commission. Kentucky alone mentions "race" in its law of this type and then in what may seem to be a positive way. Kentucky's library commission, through its Extension Division, is required to make

equitable appropriations of funds received so as to provide library facilities to "both white and colored races."

Thus, it is clear that library jim-crow has a flimsy basis in state law. Most of what is done in this regard must be accredited to the local and state library boards and to the librarians who run the libraries. *Board members and librarians consequently have a greater freedom than almost any other group of public servants in the South to open the doors of their institutions to all.* As the Southeastern States Cooperative Library Survey of 1946-47 stated: ". . . the legal compulsions on which dual public schools rest do not seem to apply to public libraries. This leaves a considerable degree of flexibility for libraries to work out effective ways of attaining dynamic and universal free public library service."

CONTEXT OF CHANGE

Aside from geography and the law, the expansion of library services to Negroes in the South is related to a more definite set of economic, political, and cultural developments. Industrialization and urbanization are taking place in the South at a faster pace than anywhere in the country, except in Southern California. It is in the cities that Southern Negroes get most of their library service. In addition to the economic and ecological effects, urbanization also tends to replace traditional folk beliefs in race relations with more civilized — at least more "citified" — conceptions of human relations.

Today the growing political strength and activity of the Negro is felt all along the race relations front. In a few places Southern Negroes are even getting themselves elected to public office. In almost every place public officials today must need pay some attention to public facilities for Negro voters. Bond issues, including funds for libraries, may be voted up or voted down.

The specific circumstances that have precipitated the opening of the doors of formerly "white only" libraries add up to an interesting story — and a long one; much too long for this summary account. It may be possible here, however, at least to note the different types of action that set off what has been quite often a positive chain reaction.

THE LOUISVILLE EXPERIENCE

In Louisville, Kentucky, Mrs. J. H. Walls, wife of a Negro physician there, requested the board of trustees of the city library system to permit Negroes to use any and all of the Louisville public libraries — especially the main, downtown library. This was in 1941. The request was turned down. Mrs. Walls, quietly yet persistently, kept up her campaign over the years, enlisting the support of various social and civic leaders and organizations in her cause. After 7 years the doors of the main library were finally open to Negroes, and in 1952 the same thing happened at all of the branches. Likewise, during this period the Negro branch of the University of Louisville — Louisville Municipal College for Negroes — was absorbed by the larger body, giving the city a racially mixed co-educational college.

Mrs. Walls' campaign is perhaps the extreme example of patience and restraint. No court action or picket line or threats or violence of any sort disturbed the lady-and-gentlemanly conduct of the parties concerned. This has not been the usual way social

change has come about in American history; quite often it has been much more "rugged" than this. Fortunately, the situation was favorable for the success of courtesy. The pre-conditions for change through moderation were present in Louisville.

THE HARD WAY

The most direct contrast to the Louisville case occurred some time ago. In August of 1939, five embittered Negro youths, who had been refused library service, staged a "sit-down strike" in the Alexandria (Virginia) public library. The young men were ordered to leave the library but persisted in remaining there, reading. The police were called and the youths were arrested. The Alexandria librarians had consistently refused to issue library cards to would-be Negro library users. Accordingly, a suit was instituted to compel the chief libriarian of the town to do so. The suit was lost, the petition being denied on procedural grounds; not on the real issue involved. The court seemed to hold that Negroes had the right to public library service but would not grant a writ of *mandamus* ordering the librarian to issue library cards to petitioner because petitioner had failed to fill out the application form required of all library users. This, of course, was a mere technicality. The upshot of the whole controversy was that Alexandria, instead of opening the doors of its existing library, erected a Negro branch *at considerable cost.* This was fifteen years ago.

More typical of the "reasonableness" of the past few years is the case of William Hale Thompson versus the City of Newport News (also in Virginia). Mr. Thompson, a Negro attorney, after he had been turned down at the main library, entered an appropriate suit for his right to read. This was in 1950. While the court action was pending, Thompson appeared before the Newport News City Council, recommending that in the interest of economy and civil rights, the public library be made available to all Again everybody was well behaved. Thompson and the Mayor and the Council actually argued but always obliquely and politely. So much so that the Newport News *Daily Press* in editorializing on the issue insisted that there was really no "argument" between the city fathers and Attorney Thompson. When the suggestion was made that maybe a "Negro branch" was the answer to the question of library service to Negroes, Thompson replied that this was "utterly ridiculous." The *Daily Press* agreed that "such an extravagance is out of the question." Soon afterwards the doors at the city library swung open to all.

NEW DAY IN MIAMI

In 1951 the new million-dollar municipal library in Miami started out on a non-jimcrow basis. Observers agree that this is an instance where a liberal-minded librarian saved a community a world of trouble. Negroes are quite articulate politically in Miami. The tax issue there was sharp. The library building was new; it could start out on a clean sheet without any jimcrow tradition to uphold or to change form. Moreover, as one of America's great playgrounds, the Miami area of Florida has benefited from the attitudes of visitors from all parts of the nation. Result: when the new library opened, it opened to everybody. No incident occurred. Nobody then or since has indicated that anything "wrong" happened. Aside from the quiet curiosity

that white and Negro people of the South seemed to manifest in each other when they realize, at first, that they are not hemmed in by any physical barriers, careful observers have reported nothing unusual from this racially integrated library situation. Subsequently, and also without incident, all of the neighborhood branches have been opened to everyone.

In Chattanooga, Tennessee, the library board, in response to pressures from Negro readers and Negro organizations, opened the doors of the main library in 1949. Separate rest rooms were, the board felt, necessary in order to comply with Tennessee State law. The former "Negro branch" is now for the use of anybody, also.

Thus, the range of civic activity against the jimcrow library has been wide. It may take the form of patient, genteel petition and persuasion: a letter to the board of control or a conference with the board or chief librarian may at times unlock the doors. A wise librarian or board may anticipate social action or, to the contrary, a stubborn, intractable board and library staff, unwilling to read the signs of the times, may not move before a court suit has been instituted or a sit-down strike effected. Obviously, state and regional library associations could help a lot, if they would. A little courage would do much to dispel the stereotype of the fearfully timid librarian.

The values to our communities and nation of an informed and thoughtful citizenry are too familiar to require restatement just now. To deny a fellow human being the right to read a book is an indecency of which none of us personally would want to be guilty. As the *Chattanooga Observer* puts it, "The South is beginning to realize that justice knows no color line and that since the public library is supported and maintained by all the taxpayers . . . all of the citizens regardless of color should share equally in the services offered."

Southern Libraries

(*Continued from page* 4)

viding two reference centers with special collections, films, and records seems too costly an undertaking for serious consideration. The board of trustees of the Little Rock Public Library announced its decision to admit Negroes to the main public library with the statement that, while the branch could "supply many library needs and has a particularly good collection of children's books, the main library contains reference books and periodicals which are too expensive to duplicate and which are needed for research."

LOCALITIES IN THE SOUTH WHERE ONE OR MORE BRANCHES GIVE SERVICE TO PATRONS REGARDLESS OF RACE

Jacksonville, Fla.	**El Paso, Tex.**
Miami, Fla.	**San Antonio, Tex.**
Louisville, Ky.	**Fredericksburg, Va.**
Burlington, N. C.	**Norfolk, Va.**
Oklahoma City, Okla.	**Roanoke, Va.**
Tulsa, Okla.	

As yet no communities in South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana have extended full service to Negroes in their main libraries. Librarians in these areas express the same concern for present inadequacies of Negro service as librarians in the rest of the South. Their concern, however, has so far been directed toward expanding separate services, with extension of partial service at the main library in some instances. Increased demands for service will no doubt change this situation, for as one South Carolina librarian comments, Negro service in his community "is as unequal as the demand for it."

AN HISTORIAN LOOKS AT RACE RELATIONS

By Herbert S. Deighton

THE subject of race relations is very much in the news. Russian propaganda, particularly when directed toward Asia and Africa, persistently attacks the United States on the sensitive subject of the status of the American Negro, a topic of burning interest to almost all foreign observers of America. Dr. Malan, the Prime Minister of South Africa, and leader of the divided white South Africans, who are themselves in a minority of one to four among their own native peoples, watches with alarm the emergence of self-governing Negro states among the British colonies in West Africa, and tries to make a permanency of segregation and white supremacy. In UNO the world-wide challenge to white domination is a constant background to the discussion of world affairs and is often brought well forward by the Arab-Asian bloc. In these circumstances it is worthwhile to remember that the problems of race relations are no new thing, no newer indeed than those of matrimonial relations, and that they are likely to go on existing in some form or other for just as long a time.

This reflection cannot fail to discourage those who look for a swift and permanent solution of all such difficulties. Yet it need be no bad thing, for the existence of unreal and unrealizable hopes of this kind can, in the long run, hold out the promise of nothing more certain than an eventual disappointment as deep as the hopes were high. From such disappointment there is an all too easy road to despair and with it to desperate remedies like those of Dr. Malan.

Herbert S. Deighton is a Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford University, where he has served as lecturer in modern history and sometime Dean of the College.

Race relations and the problems arising out of them are as old as the first contacts of unlike human groups — long before the Hittites burst upon an already divided Middle East and before the first Jews caused irritation and anxiety among the communities with whom the prospects of trade had led them to settle. Even in our own time race conflicts do not arise exclusively from the relationships of white and colored peoples. The Chinese in Malaya and South East Asia generally, and the Indians in Ceylon, Fiji, and many parts of Africa, create urgent difficulties which are only obscured by the more dramatic and perhaps only temporary issue of white domination which has recently served, in part at least, to unite peoples of all colors against it. This particular problem became urgent when Alexander the Great mobilized the resources of ancient Greece into an effective instrument of war and government which carried him deep into Asia and to the mastery of most of the then known and civilized world.

ALEXANDER AND THE PERSIANS

Alexander both saw and faced the problem and gave an indication of his solution when he insisted, after the defeat of Persia, that some of his leading generals should take Persian wives. This solution was, it seems, not entirely popular with the conscripted husbands. In spite of Alexander's early death he established a lasting attitude for there was surprisingly little of racial exclusiveness among the ruling classes of that Hellenistic society which dominated most of the world until the great days of Rome.

There is a good deal that seems familiar about the early history of Rome. The little republic established supremacy over the Italian peninsula because of the superior virtues, military and civil, of its citizenry. But it rose to wider power on the backs of soldiers, many of whom were Italian

rather than Roman, building the Roman Empire without enjoying its privileges, while some, though not all, Roman citizens were degenerated by the fruits of dominion. Prolonged disorder brought citizenship to the Italians, but Rome knew everything about gerrymandering except the word itself, and most of them were effectively deprived of the vote. It was under the Emperors, when voting had little point, though citizenship had much, that privilege and racial origin seem for the first time to have had but slight connection. The centurion who flogged Paul had bought his citizenship "with a great sum." But his victim, a Syrian Jew, was "free born." Some of the greatest Emperors were born in remote provinces, of parents far from Roman. The Empire had a large and widely varied populace, many of whom were slaves and most no better than second class citizens, yet membership of the ruling and privileged minority seems to have borne little relation to racial origin.

ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

Islam, which prevailed in wide territories that had once been Roman, had a numerous *herrenvolk* — the Faithful themselves — and it accorded for the most part a great if rather contemptuous tolerance to the infidel communities in its midst. But among the Faithful there was a racial tolerance astonishing to modern eyes. The genealogy-crazed Arab, the Turk, the Negro Muslim of the Sudan and his white co-religionist in the Balkans, achieved a high degree of practical brotherhood in the empires of their common faith.

Such too was the ideal of the Christians when, under the guidance of Paul, the Roman citizen, they translated the exclusiveness of Judaism — essentially the faith of one race — to the potential inclusiveness of the Church, the New Israel in which there is "one body, whether Jew or Greek, whether bond or free." Western Christendom in its early centuries had little occasion to concern itself with the problem, for the inadequacies of transportation gave little scope for contacts, but where such contacts did exist, in the Crusader states of Palestine, for example, or in Spain, Christians and Muslims seem, apart from wars and the blood-curdling denunciations of their leaders, to have achieved a high degree of social integration.

The great modern race problem is the result of that expansion of European influence across the world which has marked modern times. It is so much in the news because of the world-wide challenge to the superiority which the white peoples have for the past few centuries assumed and the supremacy which they have often been able to assert. There are many serious students of these matters. But there is a surprising gap in the field of their work. Perhaps because most of them have been drawn to the study by the fact of colored discontent, their investigations are concentrated upon the colored peoples. The field offered by the study of the history of the white peoples themselves, the development of their relations with the rest of the world and of this attitude to it has been surprisingly neglected. Yet the white man's attitude to his colored neighbor is at once the cause and the heart of the contemporary problem. A systematic study of the history of the European peoples and of their descendants overseas, in their relation with other peoples, could not fail to throw a good deal of light upon the background and real nature of present racial conflicts.

WHITE MEN ABROAD

The field is so little explored that it is necessarily one for speculation, but two things seem to stand out. Much trouble has arisen from the white man's characteristic search for personal self-betterment, social and economic, and this search, when he takes it overseas with him, gives rise to behaviour which is in direct contradiction to his most cherished principles.

Except for the relatively few scholarly enquiries, the missionaries with their special purpose, and the soldiers and administrators who have gone overseas on duty, most Europeans who have come into voluntary contact with other races have done so in the conscious pursuit of self-betterment. This was true of the earliest period of European expansion and it is largely true today. A recent historian, commenting on the ill manners of many of the sixteenth century Portuguese in the Far East, wrote that every peasant thought himself a *fidalgo* as soon as he rounded the Cape.

The brutality which often accompanied the first Spanish conquests in South America was to some extent redeemed by the extreme concern of the Spanish government at home for the welfare of the conquered Indians, but the government's attempts to prevent exploitation were greatly handicapped by the uncooperativeness of their people in America, most of whom would not have gone there if it had not been for the prospect of something or someone to exploit. A young English soldier was the unconscious spokesman of many white men overseas when, during the recent war, he explained the fact that he liked being in Egypt. "At home," he said, speaking for the Lancashire town from which he came, "there are two classes, there are the bosses and there are ourselves, but here, although the officers are the bosses, *we* have the natives under us."

PRIVILEGE VS. DEMOCRACY

The concept of a complete democracy within a framework of law is the greatest achievement of white political thinking and one which gives rise to a justifiable pride. Yet, parodoxically, the practical operation of the democratic process among white peoples living in multi-racial communities often serves to give political expression to the views expressed by this young soldier. In such societies the ordinary white voter uses his political power, not so much to defend his personal equality against all comers, as to ensure the continuance of the privileged position which he occupies because he is a white man. In South Africa the native is prevented by law from engaging in the better paid industrial occupations. In the Rhodesian minefields, the white Trade Unions have no truck with "equal pay for equal work." Even in Australia, almost the first act of the new social democracy, created by the grant of complete self-government fifty years ago, was to exclude all further Asiatic immigration and so introduce *apartheid* on a continental scale, excluding non-whites from the opportunities of betterment which the continent afforded.

In most multi-racial areas the white man's standard of living is a great deal higher than his colored neighbor's, and in defending it he is defending precisely that betterment which he or his ancestors, like the Spanish settlers in America, went overseas to obtain. His determined defense of it is easily understandable. Plentiful oriental labor would certainly have forced down wages in Australia — or on the Pacific slope. There are undoubtedly South African Negroes who could do the work of the white artisan and, for a time at least, would count themselves affluent on half his pay. But the consequence of this determination among peoples sprung from societies where the equalities of status and opportunity have become matters of faith, has been to establish and perpetuate great inequalities.

White voters resist the colored man's wish for economic equality even, indeed especially, among the lowest paid. They are quick to resent any sign of his appearance in the better paid or administrative groups. Thus there is rarely any admission for the colored man, however talented, to the society of his own kind among the dominant whites. Inevitably in these circumstances the ambitious and able colored man becomes the mouthpiece of colored grievances, and an instrument of the racial division of society. White egalitarianism and the modern democratic pretense that there is no such thing as an upper class thus deprives the contemporary multi-racial state of those alien leaders whose collaboration Alexander would have welcomed and whom Rome accepted as citizens and even crowned as emperors. It is at least worth reflecting that if we had a non-racial class structure with access for talent at the highest levels, we might have a much less serious racial problem.

But we have a racial problem and an acute one — although we are by no means historically unique in this — and the briefest reference to white Western history and thought makes it clear that it is one which must be faced and tackled on a basis of justice to all. It was shrewdly said long ago, in the early days of the struggles for political liberty and equality of opportunity in white society itself, that men were manifestly not equal and that for this very reason the law must treat them as though they were. Right or wrong, this belief is of the very essence of Western thought. It springs from the Greek acceptance of humanity and reason, and the

(*Continued on page* 16)

SOUTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL
FINANCE REPORT, 1953

Balance, January 1, 1953			$ 894.36
RECEIPTS			
Contributions from SRC Members & Friends		$ 2,718.20	
Contributions from Church Groups			
Methodist	$2,575.00		
Episcopal	1,115.00		
Presbyterian, U.S.A.	250.00		
Presbyterian, U.S.	200.00		
Fisk Univ. Church	25.00		
Christian Church (Edwards, Miss.)	25.00	4,190.00	
Contributions from Labor Organizations			
United Steel Workers of America — CIO	$ 1,000.00		
United Auto Workers of America — CIO	1,000.00		
United Rubber Workers of America — CIO	200.00		
American Federation of Labor	1,000.00		
International Ladies' Garment Workers Union — AFL	500.00	3,700.00	
Contributions from Other Organizations			
Miller & Rhoads Co.	$ 200.00		
Emory University Comt'y Chest	141.10		
N. C. Teachers Assoc.	50.00		
Miscellaneous Organizations	57.43	448.53	
Contributions from Foundations			
The Ford Foundation	$20,000.00		
Sidney Hillman Foundation	1,500.00		
William C. Whitney Foundation	1,000.00		
Marion R. Ascoli Fund	300.00		
Sigmund Silberman Fund	300.00		
Lucius and Eva Eastman Fund	250.00		
Aaron E. Norman Fund	100.00		
Christian Service Foundation	100.00		
Ashby Jones Memorial Fund	50.00	23,600.00	
Members Dues		3,986.50	
New South Subscriptions		534.75	
Sale of Literature		2,634.39	
Honoraria		1,078.50	
Total Receipts			$42,890.87
			43,785.23
DISBURSEMENTS			
Salaries	$28,395.04		
Social Security	298.12		
Travel	1,569.65		
Telephone & Telegraph	905.37		
Rent	1,260.00		
Printing (other than NEW SOUTH)	2,212.52		
Postage	516.18		
Office Supplies	776.88		
Books & Magazine Subscriptions	178.41		
Accounting Fees and Special Services	214.85		
Insurance, Interest and Bank Fees	85.83		
Purchase and repair of equipment	301.00		
Georgia Sales Tax	22.41		
Annual Meeting expense	1,553.75		
State School Volunteers and Committee expense	336.31		
1952 Accounts paid in full	1,916.48		
Payment of 1949 note in full	1,500.00		
Payment of 1952 note (Citizens Trust Co.)	500.00		
Paid to State Divisions	1,205.00		
Total Disbursements			43,747.80
Balance, January, 1954			$ 37.43

(*Continued on page 16*)

REPORT OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

COMMISSION ON EQUAL PENALTIES

Balance, January 1, 1953		$1,261.59
Receipts		
John Rust Foundation	$1000.00	
Doris Duke Foundation	1000.00	
Atlanta SRC Members	530.00	
Interest earned	24.34	1,554.34
Balance, January 1, 1954		$3,815.93

* * * * *

FELLOWSHIP OF THE CONCERNED

Balance, January 1, 1953		$ 306.28
Receipts		
John Hay Whitney Foundation	$1500.00	
Misc. Contributions	25.00	1,525.00
		1,831.28
Disbursements		1,270.08
Balance, January 1, 1954		$ 561.20

* * * * *

NEW SOUTH APPROPRIATION

Balance, January 1, 1953		$ 500.52
Receipts		
The Field Foundation		2,500.00
		3,000.52
Disbursements		2,205.43
Balance, January 1, 1954		$ 795.09

In our opinion the statements in this report reflect the financial condition at December 31, 1953, and the results of operations for the year ended at that date.

Lyle E. Campbell, C.P.A.

An Historian Looks at Race Relations

(*Continued from page* 14)

Christian doctrine of the brotherhood of man.

It seems today unlikely, although perhaps not entirely impossible, that the white peoples of the world could, if they were united in a determination to do so, reassert and, for some time, maintain, a world supremacy by the use of force. The significance of such a reflection, however, pales before the unquestionable fact that if they were to do this or even to attempt it, they would rapidly cease to be themselves. For the unresolved problem of race relations which presents itself today is much more than a mere challenge to the white man's position in world society. It is an acute challenge to his conscience, The present crisis may well be long-lived and it seems too much to suppose that difficulties will not arise from racial differences as long as history lasts. But upon the decisions which will be taken during the remainder of this century may depend, not only the future status of the white peoples of the world, but the unbroken development of their own traditions and civilization.

Contributions to the Southern Regional Council are tax-exempt.

NEW SOUTH

Published by
SOUTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL
63 Auburn Avenue, N. E.
Atlanta 3, Georgia

Marion A. Wright ..... *President*
Carter Wesley ..... *Vice-President*
Gordon B. Hancock ..... *Vice-President*
Alfred D. Mynders ..... *Vice-President*
A. W. Dent ..... *Vice-President*
Rufus E. Clement ..... *Chmn., Exec. Com.*
Leonard Haas ..... *Counsel*
George S. Mitchell ..... *Executive Director*
Katherine Stoney ..... *Sec.-Treas.*
Mrs. M. E. Tilly ..... *Women's Work*
Harold C. Fleming ..... *Dir. of Information*
Anna Holden ..... *Research Asst.*

Subscription rate ..... $1.50 a year

ATLANTA, GEORGIA, JANUARY, 1954

To attain through research and action programs the ideals and practices of equal opportunity for all peoples in the region.